

**REMARKS**

This is in response to the Office Action dated July 17, 2007. In view of the foregoing amendments and following representations, reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Initially, on October 30, 2007 a telephonic interview was conducted with the Examiner, his Supervisor and Applicant's undersigned representative. The interview addressed three main points regarding distinctions between the present invention, as recited in claim 5, and the prior art (i.e. Steck) applied in the rejection of claims 5-9. Each of the arguments are discussed in detail below. The only general agreement reached during the interview was that the head 22 of Steck did not apply a force in the axial direction to the main ring. Although claim 5 recites that fastening of the sub ring onto the threaded section of the pilot valve assembly block results in the pilot valve assembly block being "pressed" against, and thus fixedly secured to the main body block, the Examiner maintains the position that the language "pressed against" does not require a force being applied by the sub ring to the main ring. However, Applicant's are unable to find a dictionary definition of the term "pressed" that would support the Examiner's position. Accordingly, claim 5 has been amended to more clearly define this relationship. However, since claim 5 already required a force applied by the sub ring, it is submitted that the amendment of claim 5 does not raise any new issues requiring further consideration and/or search.

On pages 2-3 of the Office Action, claims 5-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102 (a) as being anticipated by Steck et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,402,486). This rejection is respectfully traversed for the following reasons.

Initially, it is noted that, in order to anticipate a claim, the prior art reference must disclose each and every element as set forth in the claim. As will be demonstrated below, the Steck diaphragm pump lacks at least three features of claim 5.

Claim 5 requires “a main ring engaged via threads with an annular wall formed in said main body block, said main ring being movable rotationally relative to said main body block to insert the annular wall of said main body block into an annular space defined between an axially extending outer annular portion of said main ring and an axially extending inner annular portion of said main ring.

In the rejection, the Examiner states that annular wall 83 is inserted into an annular space defined by the space between elements 84 and 86 and element 76, between an outer annular portion 86 of the main ring 20a and an inner annular portion 84 of the main ring 20a. However, the Steck annular wall 83 is clearly not “between” inner and outer annular portions of the main ring 20 (slip ring 20). As clearly shown in Figs. 2 and 4, the Steck main ring 20 does not have inner and outer annular walls that define an annular space into which an annular wall of the main body block is inserted. Thus, the Steck reference cannot anticipate claim 5 under 35 U.S.C. 102(a).

Claim 5 also requires “a sub ring engaged via a thread with a threaded section of said pilot valve assembly block such that, by threading said sub ring onto said pilot valve assembly block, an axial force is applied by said sub ring to said main ring to prevent rotational movement thereof and said pilot valve assembly block is pressed against and thus fixedly secured to said main body block.”

The Examiner takes the position that Steck includes “a sub ring 22a engaged via a thread with a threaded section 148 of the pilot valve assembly block 30 such that, by fastening of the sub ring 22a, the pilot valve assembly 30 is pressed against and fixedly secured to the main body 16 with the aid of the main ring 20a.”

However, the body 46 (see Fig. 6 of Steck), has a threaded portion 148 for securing insert portion 150 within head 22. Clearly, the threaded connection between body 46 and the head 22 of Steck does not “press” or apply an axial force to the main ring. In fact, the threaded connection between pilot 30 and head 22 of Steck does not apply any type of force to the main ring 20. Furthermore, the head 22 (sub ring) is not threaded onto the pilot 30 because the pilot is supported solely by the head. Thus, the Steck reference cannot anticipate claim 5 under 35 U.S.C. 102(a).

In view of the above, it is submitted that the present application is now clearly in condition for allowance. The Examiner therefore is requested to enter the above amendment and pass this case to issue.

In the event that the Examiner has any comments or suggestions of a nature necessary to place this case in condition for allowance, then the Examiner is requested to contact Applicant's undersigned attorney by telephone to promptly resolve any remaining matters.

Respectfully submitted,

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